municipal wastewater into the river. The industries discharging wastewater into the river have been directed to install requisite pollution control facilities. Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board has directed industries located in the Godavari basin to upgrade and improve efficiencies of treatment systems for minimizing industrial water pollution problem. To tackle municipal wastewater problem, pollution abatement works in towns namely, Bhadrachalam, Mancharial, Rajmundari and Ramagundam in Andhra Pradesh and Nanded, Nashik and Trimbakeshwar in Maharashtra have been taken up under National River Conservation Plan.

Losses to Bt. Cotton Growers

3369. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Maharashtra Hybrid Seed Corporation (MAHYCO) has been given the sole distribution rights for Bt. Cotton;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) what are the details of steps being taken to bridge the loss of the growers of Bt. Cotton?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Maharashtra Hybrid Seed Company (MAHYCO) applied to the competent authorities for development and evaluation of Bt. Cotton under the Rules for Manufacture, Use, Import, Export and Storage of Hazardous Micro organisms/Genetically Engineered Organisms or Cells, 1989. After examining the data generated by them regarding environmental safety, food safety and the agronomic potential and after independent evaluation and large scale field studies carried out by the Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR), the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) accorded conditional approval for commercial cultivation of three Bt. Cotton hybrids developed by MAHYCO.

(c) The large scale field trials of Bt. Cotton have indicated that cultivation of Bt. Cotton results in reduced insecticide use, improved control of target insect pests, increased yield and reduced production costs, leading to economic benefits to cotton growers.